

Name _____ Date _____

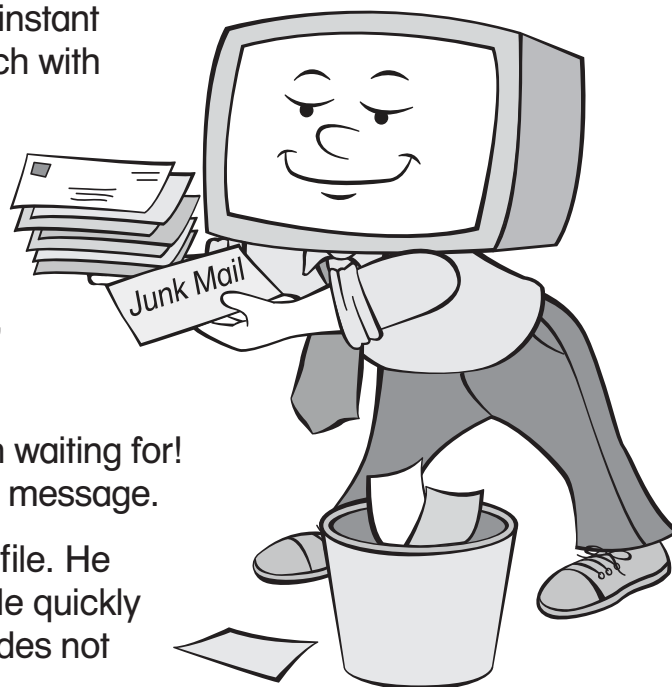
Handling E-mail and IM

Charlie is 11 and pretty good at e-mailing and instant messaging (IM). He uses e-mail to keep in touch with his grandparents. When he's sick at home, Charlie e-mails his teacher for assignments. He uses IM to talk to school friends and his brother at college.

One day Charlie gets an e-mail from an address he doesn't recognize. In the "Subject" box, it says "Smile, I've got great news!"

The message reads, "Here's what you've been waiting for! Click here." There is no name at the end of the message.

Wondering who sent it, Charlie downloads the file. He finds a picture and message that startle him. He quickly deletes the e-mail and the picture file and decides not to tell his parents.



Who did Charlie think the e-mail was from? Why?

Was it a good idea to download the file?

Was it a good idea not to mention the e-mail to his parents? Why or why not?

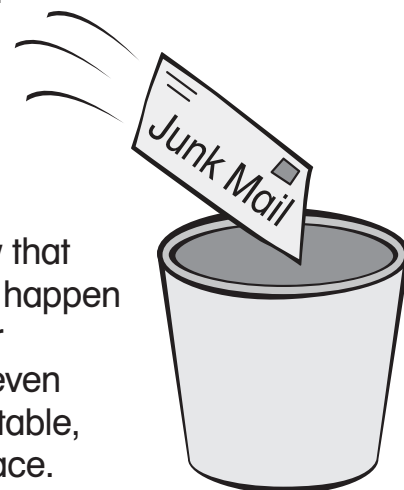
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Unwanted Messages

Charlie likes getting messages. So when he got an e-mail clearly meant for adults, he was surprised and wasn't sure what to do. Chances are that the e-mail sent to Charlie was sent to thousands of other people, too. The sender is probably a company trying to sell something.

This kind of unwanted message is called *spam*. Sometimes spam may even address you by name. Don't let this confuse you—the company's computer is simply placing your name in a message that thousands of people get.

Unwanted messages can also come from individuals. You know that kids can sometimes pass unkind or rude notes in school. It can happen with e-mail and IM, too. Some people send messages to bother other people. The messages can be embarrassing, hateful, or even scary. These kinds of messages could make you feel uncomfortable, especially if they come from someone you don't know face to face.



Knowing What to Do Puts YOU in Charge

- Don't open messages from people you don't know.
- If you open a message by mistake, don't click on links or download files that came with it. You could introduce a virus or other destructive program into your computer.
- Never reply to e-mails or IM from people or companies you don't know.
- Don't reply to spam—even to tell a company not to send any more messages.
- Watch out for messages that ask for your private information. No one should ever do that, so do not reply or click on links.
- Ask for your parent's or guardian's permission before sending photos of yourself.
- Tell an adult you trust about any message that makes you uncomfortable—even if it's from someone you know.

Take Action!

Teach your friends and family about unwanted online messages. Create a cartoon or comic strip—funny or serious. Post it in a place where people will see it often.